GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:418
ANSWERED ON:01.12.2015
Sustainable Forest Development
Kumar Dr. Virendra

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the promotion of non-timber forest produce based local livelihood is key to sustainable forest development in most parts of the country;
(b) if so, whether the pooling of available resources in Ministries and integrated scheme is necessary for such kind of promotion; and
(c) if so, the details of the initiatives taken by the Ministry in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (c) Various non timber forest produces (NTFPs), also known as Minor Forest Produce (MFP) are important for livelihoods and sustenance of forest dwelling communities. National Forest Policy, 1988 emphasizes that such produce should be protected, improved and their production be enhanced with a view to the generation of employment and income of local people. The existing forests are managed scientifically as per the prescriptions of Working Plans, prepared according to the Working Plan Codes, the latest being National Working Plan Code, 2014. This Code among other prescriptions provides for adequate survey, assessment, and sustainable harvesting of various NTFPs. Afforestation programmes in the country are being implemented on the principles of Joint Forest Management involving local communities and inter-alia include enrichment of NTFPs. The usufructs including NTFPs are shared with local communities and forest departments.

As of now, there is no integrated Scheme, however, different Ministries are involved in enhancement of resource base, harvesting, processing and value addition, marketing of NTFPs, such as the Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched a scheme "Mechanism for marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and development of value Chain for MFP" during 2013-14. The scheme is initially being implemented in States having areas under Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution for non-nationalized and abundantly available 12 MFPs. In order to ensure fair returns to the MFP collectors on a long term basis, the scheme envisages fixation of Minimum Support Price for the selected MFPs. Similarly Department of Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH), Ministry of AYUSH supports cultivation of medicinal plants. In addition, the Ministry of Rural Development is implementing the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) all over the country with an aim to reduce poverty by enabling the poor households. This is in order to provide gainful self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities, resulting in appreciable improvement in their livelihoods on a sustainable basis.

Currently, Minor Forest Produce Federations, Forest Development Corporations, Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED), and other Tribal Welfare Cooperatives in various States are involved in enrichment and sustainable harvesting/ collection of MFPs including providing training/ skills to local communities for non destructive collection and processing to enable them obtaining fair prices for such products.

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